

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough review of the present application, and respectfully request reconsideration in light of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-2, 4-10, 12-15, 17 and 19-28 are pending in the application. Claim 18 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Independent claims 1, 14 and 20 have been amended to better define the claimed invention, in manners similar to the patented claims of a related patent, i.e., U.S. Patent No. 7,276,054. Claims 19-23 have been amended to improve claim language. New claims 27-28 readable on the elected invention/species have been added to provide Applicants with the scope of protection to which they are believed entitled. The amended claims find solid support in the original drawings, e.g., FIG. 4 (at 20). No new matter has been introduced through the foregoing amendments.

The art rejections relying primarily on *Lovett* are noted. Although Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's position for at least the reasons presented in the previous Amendment(s), further amendments have nevertheless been made by this paper solely for the purpose of expediting prosecution.

In particular, the applied references singly or in combination fail to disclose, teach or suggest the claimed features that the receiving member is insertable into the holder member from below, and that an upper circumferential edge of the annular portion is made rounded to facilitate such insertion. The Examiner has not identified how the art teaches or suggests at least the highlighted claim feature. Clarification is respectfully requested.

Notwithstanding the above, independent claim 1 now additionally recites that "a height of said annular portion, relative to the upper surface of the holder member when said receiving member is retained by said holder member, gradually increases from one of said front and rear

waist regions toward the other of said front and rear waist regions and is maximal at an apex located on a longitudinal center line of said wearing article.” The added claim feature finds support in at least FIG. 4 at 20. The applied references, especially *Lovert*, do not fairly teach or suggest the claimed feature, disclosing only a bag 50 of a constant height. *See*, for example, *Lovert* at FIG. 6.

Independent claim 14 now additionally recites that “said annular portion having inner and outer circumferential surfaces and a top surface connecting said inner and outer circumferential surfaces, said top surface being convex upward to define an upper circumferential edge that is rounded so as to facilitate the insertion of said annular portion from below said holder member through said through-hole.” The added claim feature finds support in at least FIG. 4 at 53. The applied references, especially *Lovert*, do not fairly teach or suggest the claimed feature, disclosing only a bag 50 without any rounded edge defined by an upwardly convex top surface. *See*, for example, *Lovert* at FIG. 6.

Independent claim 20 now additionally recites a feature similar to that of claim 14. Claim 20 also requires “said annular portion comprises a liquid-impervious top covering sheet defining said inner and outer circumferential surfaces as well as said top surface, said liquid-impervious top covering sheet being bonded to the top wall of said discharge containing portion around said aperture; and flexible and elastically compressible material filled between said top covering sheet and the top wall of said discharge containing portion.” The added claim feature finds support in at least FIG. 4 at 53 and 56. The applied references, especially *Lovert*, do not fairly teach or suggest the claimed feature, disclosing only a bag 50 without any further details on the configuration of the wall of the bag. *See*, for example, *Lovert* at FIG. 6.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent claims 1, 14, and 20 are patentable over the applied art of record.

The dependent claims, including any new claim(s), are considered patentable at least for the

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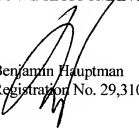
reason(s) advanced with respect to the respective independent claim(s).

Each of the Examiner's rejections has been overcome. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are now in condition for allowance. Early and favorable indication of allowance is courteously solicited.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, Applicant's attorney of record, to facilitate advancement of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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